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18 NOV 1953 ✓

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT : Administrative Assistant Positions, Contact Division, Office of Operations Field Offices

1. PROBLEM:

To determine the proper classification of Administrative Assistant positions in the field offices of the Contact Division, Office of Operations.

2. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM:

- a. Current classification of the subject positions is grade GS-7. This grade has been in effect in [redacted] field offices since they were originally established in the latter part of 1947 and early part of 1948; grades for the remaining offices were originally set at GS-6, but were subsequently changed to GS-7 based on classification determination that there was no substantiation for the grade differential.
- b. Detailed classification review of these positions on two previous occasions, once in 1951 and again in 1952, made with a view toward possible upgrading, resulted in both cases in substantiation of the GS-7 level.
- c. Due to the static classification situation and consequent lack of opportunity for promotion in the same line of work, Administrative Assistants in [redacted] of the field offices have been reassigned within the past year to professional intelligence work in an effort to afford them chance for advancement which they did not have as Administrative Assistants.
- d. Length of time in grade for personnel currently serving as Administrative Assistants at the GS-7 level ranges from two to six years, three individuals having been in GS-7 for six years or slightly over.

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- e. Rotation of incumbents of these positions to positions in headquarters affording better career developmental and promotional opportunities has not been feasible in the past nor is it expected to be in the future.

3. DISCUSSION:

In accordance with the classification evaluation made with respect to the subject positions (Evaluation Report attached as Annex), the following specific conclusions were reached:

- a. There is no basis for distinction among the various field offices in terms of relative size or the presence of resident offices which would support a grade differential among the various Administrative Assistants; hence any upgrading would affect all [REDACTED] positions. 25X9
- b. Evaluation of the subject positions in terms of changes which have occurred since they were originally established at the GS-7 level shows that they have not materially changed in difficulty or responsibility. Changes noted were primarily in volume of work by virtue of increase in size of the field offices and the establishment of resident offices in certain cases. This additional work load adds somewhat to the positions but does not in itself substantiate a change in grade.
- c. Comparisons with field positions in [REDACTED] and the Security Office tend to support retention of the positions at GS-7, although in the case of [REDACTED] the comparison would not preclude advancement of the positions to GS-8 if other comparisons would so warrant. STATSPEC
- d. Comparison with similar positions in ORR and OSI and with the Administrative Assistant position to the Assistant Director for Operations tends to provide justification for allocation to GS-8.
- e. Consideration in terms of the general secretarial grade pattern, with particular reference to DD/P, would substantiate allocation to at least GS-8.

Although the points summarized above lead to varying conclusions when considered separately, it is believed that sufficient technical justification exists to warrant allocation of the subject positions to grade GS-8. Heavily weighted in reaching this conclusion is the general shift upward in the secretarial grade pattern which has taken place over the years, which renders the original estimate of GS-7, commensurate with the secretarial pattern when first established in 1947, out of line with the current pattern.

STATSPEC

While valid as a technical classification determination, the conclusion of GS-8 does not provide a satisfactory solution to the practical problem faced by the Contact Division, which is in essence to provide a solution to the "dead end" nature of Administrative Assistant positions in its field offices. The only expedient available under the current situation, which has been used in three cases to date, is to attempt reassignment of Administrative Assistants to professional intelligence duties. This course of action is in no way assured of success in every case or necessarily in consonance with the most desirable career development of the employees so affected. Upgrading to GS-8 will mitigate the situation to a slight extent, but since many of the employees of long tenure are at advanced salary rates in GS-7, promotion to GS-8 would not provide any considerable value monetarily and would in several cases only serve to postpone the problem for another two or three years. In view of the administrative considerations involved, quite apart from the technical classification determination, which is essentially a compromise between conflicting comparisons, there would appear to be some merit to a case for GS-9. It is in no way suggested that there is or should be an indefinite progression of grade levels upward to avoid the reality of dead end positions; in the instant case, however, it is viewed that rigid application of the GS-8 level afforded by normal classification evaluation is unduly restrictive. Accordingly, based on the combined administrative and classification merits of the case, allocation to GS-9 would provide an adequate solution and at the same time provide no serious distortion of the general classification alignment within the Agency.

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Since comparison with Administrative Assistant positions in the Security Office field installations indicates basic comparability to the subject positions, upgrading would affect the Security Office positions also. [REDACTED] positions in the Security Office would be involved.

From the budgetary standpoint, the difference between the base salary step of GS-7 and the base of GS-9 would amount to an increase of \$19,665 in basic compensation if the positions are approved for GS-9. The actual increase would be less than this figure due to the fact that many of the incumbents are now at salary rates in excess of the base rate of GS-7. The prospective upgrading of the Security Office positions are included in computing monetary cost involved.

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4. CONCLUSIONS:

Based on the foregoing discussion it is concluded that in consideration of all aspects involved, administrative as well as classification, the subject positions warrant allocation to grade GS-9.

5. RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Administrative Assistant positions be allocated to GS-9 in both the Contact and the Security field offices.

[REDACTED]
Acting Personnel Director

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ANNEX:

Evaluation Report - Administrative Assistant

ACTION BY APPROVING AUTHORITY:

APPROVED: As amended below.

Date: 14 January 1954

CC- DD/A *Chivers*
subject - Pers. 3

L. K. WHITE
Acting Deputy Director (Administration)

Except for the field stations named below, classification of administrative assistant positions located in the field offices of the Contact Division in Grade GS-8 is approved as the appropriate grade level commensurate with the scope of responsibilities and duties assigned to these positions. Approval is given to classify these positions for **[REDACTED]** offices of the Contact Division in Grade GS-9. In view of this recognition of the different levels of responsibilities and duties existing among these positions, no general approval can be given at this time to upgrading the positions of administrative assistant assigned to field units of the Security Office. Further study of this group of positions, with particular attention to variabilities which may exist in individual cases, would appear necessary.

/s/

L. K. WHITE
Acting Deputy Director
(Administration)

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